

# Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge

## *Planning Newsletter and Issues Workbook*

### Comprehensive Conservation Planning

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is starting work on a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) for the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The plan will establish management goals and objectives for all refuge programs over the next 15 years. For example, refuge wildlife, habitat, land protection and visitor services programs will all be evaluated during the planning process.

This planning project provides a unique opportunity for the Service to involve all of those interested in the long-term management of the refuge. You can play a significant role in the development of this far-reaching plan!



*Freeland Tract/USFWS*

### Who will be involved in developing the plan?

The local refuge staff in Canaan Valley, WV will lead the effort, with assistance from the Service's Northeast Regional Office. We will invite other Service experts, as well as representatives from the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, to serve on our core planning team.

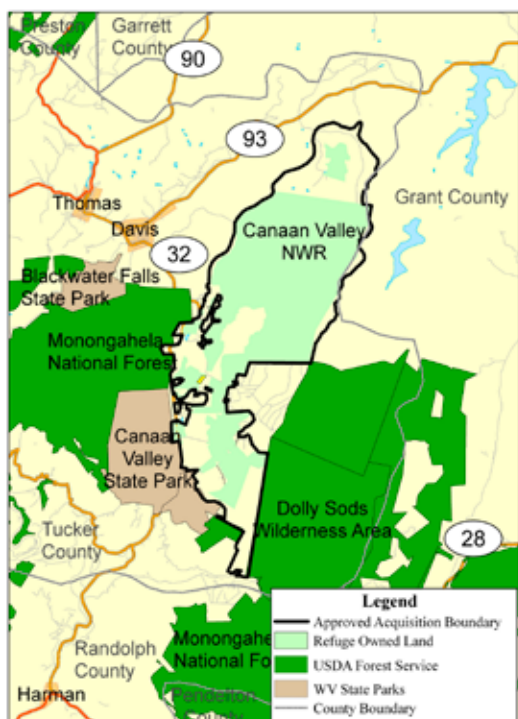
We intend to engage local residents and community leaders in discussing ways the refuge could become an integral part of the community. Below is a list of forums we will use. Do you have any suggestions for additional forums to reach out to the community?

- Hold open houses
- Develop informational newsletters
- Write feature articles
- Participate in civic and professional group events
- Give presentations at community meetings
- Hold working group sessions and technical expert meetings
- Continue partnerships

### How Can You Get Involved?

Please help us evaluate current management, envision future desired conditions on the refuge, plan the future of our public use programs, and identify other important issues. Start by completing and returning the workbook. To stay informed, complete the mailing information on the back of this workbook. Please:

- Complete and return the workbook
- Stay informed, get on the mailing list
- Participate in the open houses
- Contact us at any time



*Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge*

# Planning Newsletter

## Upcoming Open Houses

### Thursday, October 12

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

The Randolph County Community Arts Center  
Randolph Avenue  
Elkins, WV

### Friday, October 13

2:00-4:00 p.m.

Parson's Senior Center  
206 Third Street  
Parsons, WV

### Saturday, October 14

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Thomas Education Center,  
St. Thomas Catholic Church  
Gymnasium  
Thomas, WV

*All facilities are fully accessible.*

Contact the refuge for additional information: 304/866-3858

## What should I know about Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge?

The Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge (refuge) was established on August 11, 1994 with the purchase of 86 acres. Over the last 12 years, with further acquisitions, the refuge has grown to 15,822 acres in size. The refuge was established to conserve and protect fish and wildlife resources, including endangered and threatened species, in the unique wetlands and uplands of this high elevation, moist valley. The approved acquisition boundary is 24,000 acres. It's the largest wetland complex in the state of West Virginia. The refuge encompasses the headwaters of the Little Blackwater River, 14 miles of the Blackwater River, as well as many miles of other tributaries.

At least four federally-listed threatened or endangered species may be found within the refuge's boundary, including the bald eagle, Cheat Mountain salamander, West Virginia northern flying squirrel, and the Indiana bat. The refuge is West Virginia's largest single location for breeding snipe and migratory woodcock. Shorebirds, interior forest songbirds, raptors, and marsh birds rely on the wetlands of the refuge during spring and fall migration periods. The cool, moist climate of the refuge supports 109 plant species that have distinctly northern ranges but are able to persist in Canaan Valley. Balsam fir, easily seen on the Freeland tract, is one such plant. In addition, 73 plant species in Canaan Valley are listed by the State of West Virginia Division of Natural Resources as Species of Concern, like Jacob's ladder. With help from our partners and volunteers, we are restoring the wetlands and uplands within the refuge to provide additional habitat for these important species.

While wildlife and habitat conservation come first on refuges, excellent wildlife observation, photography, fishing, environmental education, interpretation, and hunting opportunities can be enjoyed on the refuge.

The refuge headquarters is located on Route 32 in Canaan Valley. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday, and the Visitor Center is open 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sundays as volunteers and staff are available. Please visit or contact the refuge for information.

## Who's Leading this Effort?

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, part of the Department of the Interior, is the principle federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing the nation's fish and wildlife populations and their habitats.

The Service also manages the National Wildlife Refuge System, the world's largest collection of lands set aside specifically for the protection of fish and wildlife populations and habitats. Refuges provide important habitats for native plants and animals, facilitating the preservation of threatened or endangered species. Refuges also offer a wide variety of wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, and many have visitor facilities, interpretive trails, and environmental education programs.



# Issues Workbook

## Let's Get Started...



*View of the Valley/USFWS*

Participation by you and other interested individuals and groups is critical to the success of this planning process. This will help us consider your interests as we develop the Comprehensive Conservation Plan.

At this early stage in the planning process we are seeking your input via public meetings and this Issues Workbook. Our intent is to hear directly from folks like you - to learn how you feel about the refuge, any issues or concerns you might have, as well as your ideas for getting things done.

The following workbook will be available at the public meetings, and will be shared with refuge visitors, neighbors, and partners who may not be able to attend the meetings. We have compiled a list of questions to provide a basis for comparing your comments with others we receive.

Please answer the following questions. Feel free to add additional comments in the space provided. Give us a call, email or write us at the address below.

The comments we receive will help us identify issues and develop goals and objectives.

## Questions on Your Refuge Experience

1. How many days do you visit the refuge each year?

\_\_\_\_\_ days per year

2. What activities have you participated in while visiting the refuge? (Please check all that apply).

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird Watching           | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing/Kayaking         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross County Skiing       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking/Nature Trails    | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteering              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Guided Interpretive tours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nature/Wildlife Viewing | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)    |



*Refuge Headquarters/USFWS*

Which activity is most important to you? \_\_\_\_\_



# Issues Workbook



*Canaan Valley wetland/USFWS*

What areas of the refuge do you usually visit?

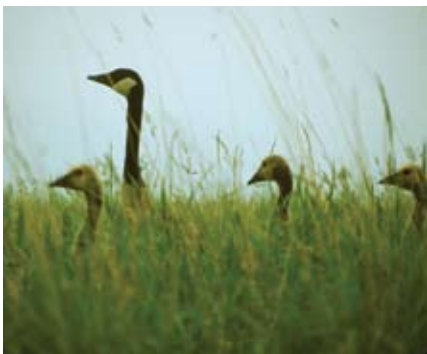
- ☐ Freeland Road and Forest Road 80
- ☐ Beall Trails
- ☐ Camp 70 Trails
- ☐ A-Frame Road
- ☐ White Grass Trails (Winter)
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you participated in any refuge-sponsored events or activities? If so, please check all that apply.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trail hikes          | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish and wildlife clinic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird walks           | <input type="checkbox"/> Walks and presentations  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photography programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoe walks       | _____   |

4. What do you value most about Canaan Valley?

What do you value most about the refuge?



*Canada Goose and goslings/USFWS*

5. What do you consider to be the most important problem facing the Canaan Valley?

What do you consider to be the most important problem facing the refuge?

# Issues Workbook

## Questions on Natural Resources Conservation

The Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge provides a wide diversity of habitat for migratory birds, resident fish and wildlife and threatened and endangered species. The refuge's large wetland complex, cool climate and elevation changes provide unique habitat in the State for a large number of rare plants and animal species. This plan will emphasize the need to conserve, protect, and enhance these habitats and the species dependent on them.

6. In your opinion, which species or habitats should be a management priority?

7. In your opinion, which options should the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursue in protecting wildlife habitats within the refuge acquisition boundary? (Please check up to 3 choices)

- ☐ land acquisition from willing sellers at market value
- ☐ conservation easements; e.g. purchasing development rights
- ☐ work with conservation groups
- ☐ environmental education
- ☐ habitat restoration partnerships with private landowners
- ☐ no active involvement
- ☐ other (please specify)

8. On a scale of 1-5, how do you feel about the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service acquiring land from willing sellers at fair market value in the Canaan Valley area (1=not at all acceptable, 5=very acceptable)?

1   2   3   4   5 (please circle one)

Comments?

S. Maslowski /USFWS



*Bobolink*



*Planting Spruce on the Refuge/ USFWS*

# Issues Workbook



*Freeland Boardwalk/USFWS*

9. Are any of the following natural resource issues a concern to you in the Canaan Valley? If so, please rank your top three choices (1=highest concern, 3=lowest concern of your three choices).

- \_\_\_\_\_ the development and fragmentation of habitats
- \_\_\_\_\_ invasion of exotic plant and animal species
- \_\_\_\_\_ increased use in sensitive habitat areas
- \_\_\_\_\_ degradation of water quality
- \_\_\_\_\_ lack of active management to improve wildlife habitats
- \_\_\_\_\_ habitat restoration
- \_\_\_\_\_ other issues (please specify)

10. If possible, please provide additional details on why you selected the above. In particular, we would be interested to know specific locations of concern.

## Questions on Recreation and Public Access

The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 identifies six priorities for wildlife-dependent public use on national wildlife refuges: environmental education, interpretation, fishing, hunting, wildlife observation and photography.

Public uses are permitted when they are “compatible” with the purpose(s) for which a refuge was established. In determining compatibility the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) considers:

- anticipated impacts to natural resources;
- safety; and,
- budget and staffing



*Fish Clinic/USFWS*

Following the compatibility determination process, the Service has opened 31 miles of trail on the Refuge. All trails are open for pedestrian use, 23 miles are open for bicycle and 22 miles are open for horse use. An additional 10 miles of trail are open for cross country skiing in the winter. Hunting is also permitted on most of the refuge property, and fishing is permitted where roads or trails provide access to rivers, streams or ponds. Volunteers help staff the Visitor Center and help with environmental education and interpretation. This planning process will evaluate these and other opportunities for priority public use on the refuge.

# Issues Workbook

11. Do our recreational facilities meet your needs?

Please Circle Only One									
Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Very Well	Excellent		Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1	2	3	4	5	Hiking/walking trails for wildlife viewing opportunities	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Outdoor education activities	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Access for people with disabilities	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Visitor information/orientation center	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Deer hunting opportunities	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Small game hunting opportunities	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Upland gamebird hunting opportunities	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Waterfowl hunting opportunities	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Fishing opportunities	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Kiosks or signs with information about thte refuge or its wildlife	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Viewing areas with information about different wildlife habitats	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Directional signs for refuge	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Access for canoes and kayaks	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Educational information on historical sites	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Guided bird walks, lectures, presentations	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Website with information about thte refuge and its activities	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Opportunity to interact with refuge staff	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Horseback trails	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Bicycle trails	A	B	C	D
1	2	3	4	5	Other services (please specify) _____	A	B	C	D

12. We are interested in the ways community residents engage in local or regional natural resource or environmental issues. Please indicate which of the activities you have participated in within the last 5 years.

Participation	Yes	No
1. Attending a public hearing or meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Contacting or writing a state/federal agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Contacting or writing a U.S. senator, member of congress, or state legislator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Joining a interest group (such as an environmental, sportsman's, animal rights, agriculture, or resource use organization)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. If YES, Please list organization (s) _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Leading an interest group (such as an environmental, sportsman's, animal rights, agriculture, or resource use organization)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Issues Workbook

Dave Menke/USFWS



*Cedar Waxwing*

13. Are there activities or services that you think should be allowed at Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge that currently are not allowed?

☐ No ☐ Yes (If yes, please list these activities)

14. Are there activities or services that you think should not be allowed at Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge that currently are allowed?

☐ No ☐ Yes (If yes, please list these activities)

15. Please include here any additional comments on recreation, education, and public access.



*Idlemans Run/USFWS*

16. Please include here any additional comments on conserving fish and wildlife habitat.

17. Where did you obtain this workbook? (This will help us determine the most effective places to distribute these in the future.)



**Mail Issues Workbooks to:**

Bill Zinni, Refuge Planner  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
300 Westgate Center Drive  
Hadley, MA 01035

Workbooks may also be mailed to or  
dropped-off at the refuge office.

**For Additional Information**

Contact the refuge:

CanaanValley NWR  
HC 70 Box 200  
Davis, WV 26260

Phone: 304/ 866-3858  
Fax: 304/ 866-3852

E-mail: fw5rw\_cvnwr@fws.gov  
Website: <http://www.fws.gov/canaanvalley/>



*Refuge Staff/USFWS*

**Federal Relay Service for the deaf or hard of hearing:**

1 800/877-8339

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
<http://www.fws.gov>

**October 2006**

**That's it! Thank you for your time.**

**IMPORTANT:** Now that you are done, please separate pages 3-8 and mail them back to us by October 31, 2006 . We will summarize these public comments and those received at the public meeting in our next newsletter. Please help us keep our mailing list updated by completing the following.

If you wish to receive future "Planning Updates" about the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge comprehensive conservation plan, please fill in the appropriate information below and return it with the Issues Workbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Yes) Keep me on your mailing list/add me to your mailing list

\_\_\_\_\_ (No) Take me off your mailing list.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are acting in an official capacity as the representative of an organization please complete the following two items.

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT:** Please note that names on the CCP mailing list become part of the public record for this project. The Service must release names only, if requested, under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act of 1974. To retain you on our mailing list we need your permission. Please sign below.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Division of Planning  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
300 Westgate Center Drive  
Hadley, MA 01035